

Food Quality Protection Act funds for a Sustainable Agriculture Program: 2005 Requests for Proposals

Overview

EPA Region 9 is requesting proposals for **one large grant** to help implement the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and support “transition” efforts by growers to more environmentally-sound pest management practices. Special emphasis will be on sustainable agriculture programs that address a diverse array of commodities and have a proven track record of grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices. Successful applicants will also have an applied research and extension component to their program. “Sustainable” agriculture refers to farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable and socially responsible. This assistance will be awarded through the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 66.716.

Important Dates:

- January 3, 2005 – Solicitation Posted on Web
- March 4, 2005 – Proposals must be received by close of business.
- April 4, 2005 – Funding decisions are announced.
- September 30, 2005 – Awards made.

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 9, Agriculture Program

Full Text Announcement

I. Funding Opportunity Description

The purpose of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) Grant Program is to help implement the FQPA and support “transition” efforts by growers to more environmentally-sound pest management practices. Special emphasis will be on sustainable agriculture programs that address a diverse array of commodities and have a proven track record of grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices. Successful applicants will also have an applied research and extension component to their program. “Sustainable” agriculture refers to farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable and socially responsible.

Background

The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), passed by Congress in 1996, establishes health-based standards for pesticide residues in raw and processed food. It is intended to protect public health by reducing exposure to pesticides and creating an environment favorable for the development and adoption of lower risk, effective crop protection tools for U.S. agriculture. The EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous agricultural organizations are working on efforts to implement the FQPA. For this effort, EPA established regional programs for FQPA implementation and partnership activities to reduce risks and use of pesticides in agriculture. For more background information on FQPA, visit the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/fqpa/>

II. Award Information

The EPA Region 9 Agriculture Program anticipates having up to **\$200,000** in 2005 to award as **one large grant** to an eligible applicant. The award will be for a sustainable agriculture program that incorporates education, extension, demonstration, and implementation of innovative efforts that enable growers to reduce their reliance on pesticides targeted for removal under FQPA and move towards more sustainable pest management practices. Costs incurred prior to the grant award will not be reimbursed.

III. Eligibility Information

As directed by the EPA Region 9 Administrator, EPA is only soliciting proposals from qualified **applicants located in the state of California**. All organizations located in California with current sustainable agriculture programs are eligible to submit proposals including state, local governments, universities, Tribes, non-profits, and other eligible entities interested in a Food Quality Protection Act grant (CFDA 66.716) under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20. For-profit organizations are not eligible.

Matching funds are not required; however applicants are strongly encouraged to leverage funds from other sources. The award for the selected proposal will be available September 30, 2005. Funding may be used for **up to two years** from the time that the grant is awarded.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria will be used to evaluate all submitted proposals:

- *Sustainable agriculture program using a whole systems approach.*
Applicants must be able to demonstrate that they have an on-going sustainable agriculture program. Programs must employ a “whole systems” approach to pest management, integrating pest, soil, crop, and water management practices. Applicants should describe their program, including its approach in addressing a diverse array of commodities, along with the applied research and extension program components. The method for grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices should also be addressed.
- *Importance of project in relation to FQPA.*
The proposal should include a project or projects that address critical pest management issues relative to FQPA. Projects must focus on actual results, getting information and practices into the hands of growers who actually use them to shift away from FQPA-targeted pesticides to other methods of pest control.
- *Commodity or region-wide significance.*
Submitted proposals need to address one or more commodities. Applicants should discuss critical pest management issues, explaining the importance of the project or projects and commodity. Include how the practice and reduced risk tools could be adapted to other locations with similar cropping systems.
- *On-farm demonstration with an active role for multiple grower participation.*
Projects should include partnerships and participation of growers as part of the project activities. Cooperation with scientists, extension officers, pest control advisors, non-profit organizations, and other partners is also encouraged. Include letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project.
- *Use of an innovative extension model that enhances likelihood of grower adoption.*
Include clear plans for extension, outreach or communication that will likely lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices, and how long term adoption will be measured.

- *Involvement of key institutions and stakeholders.*

List the key institutions and stakeholders involved with your project including commodity boards, state and federal agriculture, resource and regulatory agencies.

Clearly stated objectives. Clearly state and explain the project objectives. Discuss to what degree the project will:

1. reduce or eliminate the use of organophosphate, carbamate and carcinogenic pesticides,
2. increase farmers' adoption of reduced-risk alternatives and/or ecologically-based integrated pest or crop management methods, in significant commercial land area, and
3. create a measurable environmental impact (if applicable).

- *Performance measures for objectives.* Proposals will need to include three performance measures that can be tracked throughout the project. These measures can either be “direct” and/or “surrogate” measures. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with IPM adoption. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that should lead to environmental changes. Although direct measures are more powerful than surrogate measures, most are expensive to track. Consider partnering with agencies or organizations that are already monitoring environmental quality in the project area.

To identify appropriate project performance measures, choose from the measures listed in the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/> (**SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures**). These measures have the potential to indicate environmental improvement as a result of the increased adoption of IPM. They are grouped into nine categories: Dietary (D), Human (H), Behavior (B), Economic (E), Soil (S), Water (W), Air (a), Plant (P) and Animals (A). Be sure to describe the method you will use to attain data to support the measures indicated.

PLEASE NOTE: A proposal may include a *component* for *applied on-farm research*, as long as they also have *demonstration, education and/or outreach* activities. In addition, proposals that maximize the use of resources for “on-the-ground” activities will be viewed more favorably than those proposals with high administrative costs.

IV. Proposal Submission Information

All proposals should be limited to 12 pages as described below. It is recommended that confidential information not be included.

All proposals should contain the following:

Abstract (maximum two pages). Please include name of project, point of contact and complete contact information, amount requested, and if this is a continuing project. If this project builds on previous work, please explain the project's relevance to work completed and why this particular proposal is important.

Body of Proposal and Workplan (maximum of eight pages). Include a well-conceived workplan that is realistic and appropriate to achieving the identified objectives. This should include a brief background on the main issues or challenges, specific objectives, main activities, and expected outcomes and deliverables. Include the project area, and a timeline.

Performance Measures. The workplan should also include three performance measures selected from the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at www.aftresearch.org/sai/ as discussed on page four of this Request for Proposal.

Budget (maximum two pages). Please submit a detailed budget with your proposal, linking the cost of each objective with the budget. Include information on other funding sources, if any.

Qualifications and Support. Include the qualifications and background on the main people or organizations involved as an attachment. Include letters of support from growers or other collaborators, specifying their contribution in project implementation.

Applicants must submit a hard copy of the application along with an electronic version on a floppy disk or CD in Word Perfect or MS Word. Send all proposals to:

Cindy Wire, Agriculture Program
US EPA, Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street, CED-1
San Francisco, CA 94105

All proposals must be **received by Close of Business on March 4, 2005**. Proposals received after this date will not be reviewed.

V. Proposal Review Information

Proposals will be reviewed and ranked by a panel of experts based on the selection criteria listed on page three and four. Decisions on the grants will be made by **April 4, 2005**. Applicants will be notified within the following week.

VI. Award Administration

To finalize the grant procedure, the award recipient will need to complete financial and administrative grant paperwork. EPA staff will be available for assistance.

Reporting

The selected grant recipient will be asked to complete at least one concise progress report after the grant is awarded, and a final report at the end of the grant period. Progress reports should address the status of all of the objectives and activities in the proposal, and a statement of impacts and expenses. Quarterly Financial Status Reports will also be required.

Disputes

Procedures at 40 CFR 30.63 and 40 CFR 31.70 will apply.

Confidentiality

Applicants must clearly mark information they consider confidential and EPA will make confidentiality decisions in accordance with agency regulations at 40 CFR, Part 2, Subpart B.

Disclaimer

EPA Reserves the right to reject all proposals and to not make any awards.

VII. Agency Contact

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this FQPA Request for Proposal, please call Cindy Wire, Agriculture Program at (415) 947-4242, or email her at wire.cindy@epa.gov.